

See also Wingspread

Wingspread Development Viewed By Capitola CofC

The Capitola Chamber of Commerce this morning heard a presentation on the Wingspread Beach development in Aptos, but instead of taking a stand on the proposal said it would prefer to "gather information" on it in the words of president Les Anderson.

The chamber's board of directors last month expressed disappointment that the backers of Wingspread — Conference Associates — had not come to the chamber to make a presentation.

Conference Associates is a branch of Hare, Brewer and Kelly, who have a 99-year lease on the land from the University of California. The 67-acre Porter-Sesnon property, adjacent to New Brighton State Beach, has been proposed for a combination performing arts facility, conference center and nearly 500 tourist rental units.

Tim Welch, spokesman for Wingspread, made a slide presentation on the proposal and chamber directors asked a number of questions centered around traffic, water service, funding and rental costs.

Anderson said chamber was not ready to take a stand on the proposal. Instead, he said the group's purpose now is to "gather information."

He said afterward that the Capitola Chamber's role was somewhat different than that of the Aptos and Soquel chambers, each of which endorsed Wingspread Beach. However, Anderson said the

chamber might take a stand in the future, Anderson added.

Chamber concerns centered around traffic impacts because of the development. Director Steve Lemieux questioned the possibility of a traffic bottleneck at Highway 1 and Park Avenue. His suggestions included the upgrading of the railroad by Southern Pacific for light rail transit.

While Welch replied that an environmental impact report has just begun which would address traffic, he expects the impact to be "manageable."

The tourist rental units, he explained, would generate much less traffic than single-family residential units, which average some 12 vehicle trips per day.

Welch estimated prices of the units to run between \$100,000 to \$400,000. Nightly rentals might be about \$100 a night, he said.

The environmental impact report by the developers is expected to be completed in mid-March. The report will proceed despite the fact the county Board of Supervisors has designated the property as low-density park use and recommends it be purchased by the state.

Welch said developers plan to file for an amendment to a second recommendation by the county that limited the number of tourist rental units to 130.